



Graduate School Admission Policy for Degree-seeking Students	
Responsible Official: Provost	Responsible Office: Graduate School, College of Graduate and Continuing Studies

Policy Purpose

This policy specifies the admission process for degree-seeking graduate students to East Tennessee State University.

Policy Statement

This policy applies only to prospective students who are applying as a part-time or full-time degree-seeking graduate student.

The Graduate School will consider a prospective student's completed application and required supporting documentation for admission as a degree-seeking graduate student to East Tennessee State University (ETSU). The program will make an admission recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School will make the final decision. The Graduate School will issue a written Notice of Decision. A prospective student may be admitted, denied, or waitlisted. Students will be notified of the specific program and term to which they are admitted.

ETSU may charge a one-time non-refundable application fee.

I. Graduate Admissions Requirements.

A. Graduate School Requirements.

The Graduate School will consider a prospective graduate student for admission as a degree-seeking graduate student at ETSU, if prior to the Application Deadline the individual:

1. submits a complete admission application;
2. pays the application fee;
3. submits unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, including a transcript that reflects the individual has earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution;
4. has a GPA of:
 - International Applicants: 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale)
 - US Citizens or US Residents: 2.5 or higher (on a 4.0 scale)

In addition to the requirements listed above, International Applicants must also meet the requirements listed in Section II of this policy.

Prospective students who do not hold a bachelor's but are currently enrolled in or are graduates of an accredited Professional Degree Program approved by Graduate Council may be admitted for graduate coursework without a bachelor's degree at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate School.

B. Program Specific Admission Requirements.

Individual graduate programs may have additional admissions requirements and/or different admission standards than the Graduate School admission standards, including but not limited to higher GPA requirements, which a prospective student must meet to be admitted to the program. These requirements are outlined in the graduate catalogue. Certain programs may have limited enrollment capacity.

C. Official Transcript Requirement.

Students must submit Official Transcripts, degree certificates, and English translations of Official Transcripts to the Graduate School following the offer of admission. These documents must be received no later than the last day of the first semester of enrollment. If Official Transcripts are not received, the student will be dismissed from the Graduate School and the program. In rare circumstances, including but not limited to the closure of an institution previously attended by the applicant, the Dean of the Graduate School at their discretion may approve alternative verification.

II. International Applicants Additional Requirements.

International Applicants must meet the requirements listed in Section I of this policy and must also:

- A. Provide a certified translation of unofficial transcripts or attested university records (including proof of all degrees received) if the transcripts are not in English; notarized copies and third-party attestations are not acceptable. Individual year marksheets from Indian institutions are required; summary marksheets will not suffice.
- B. Have the minimum equivalent of a four-year bachelor's degree with at least a "B" average based on the home country's grading scale as approved by the Graduate Council and published by the Graduate School on its admissions website. European students with three-year Bologna bachelor's degrees and Indian students with three-year bachelor's degrees from Indian universities ranked A (3.01- 4.0) through the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) accreditation process will be considered to have equivalent four-year degrees.
- C. Provide proof of English proficiency in one of the manners approved by the Graduate Council and published by the Graduate School on its admissions website.

III. Dual Graduate Degree Program Admission.

A student may pursue two graduate programs simultaneously as follows:

- A. Two master's programs;
- B. A master's program and a graduate certificate program;
- C. A doctoral program and a graduate certificate program; or
- D. A doctoral program and a master's program.

The student must apply to the second program for a specified start term. Prior to admission to the second program, approval must be granted by the graduate program coordinator in each program and by the Dean of the Graduate School. All admission and program requirements of both programs and the Graduate School, including Matriculation Limits, must be met.

The Dean of the Graduate School at their discretion can review and approve requests for other combinations of dual admission.

IV. Change of Program or Concentration.

Students seeking to change from one graduate program to another must formally apply to the new graduate program. Students are responsible for ensuring that all admissions materials required by the new program are received by the Graduate School prior to any program deadlines. Students must resign from the program in which they are currently enrolled prior to accepting admission into the new program.

If a program does not allow a change in concentration, the student must apply to the program and follow all requirements for admission. If a program does permit a change in concentration, the student follows the program's requirements for change in concentration.

V. Admission of ETSU Faculty Members as Degree-Seeking Graduate Students.

Tenure track, clinical faculty, or administrative staff may be admitted to a graduate program at ETSU as a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student and may retain graduate faculty status. Before offering admission into a graduate program as a degree-seeking student, the Dean of the Graduate School will review any potential conflicts of interest with the dean, department chair or supervisor of the faculty or staff home unit and as necessary with the dean of the college of the program in which the student plans to enroll. Faculty may maintain graduate faculty status if the conflict is deemed insignificant to affect the student and faculty roles. If there is the likelihood of a conflict of interest, graduate faculty status may be placed on hold while the graduate faculty member is matriculating in a graduate program. Significant potential for conflicts of interest are grounds to deny admission.

VI. Readmission for Inactivity.

Any individual who was previously admitted as an ETSU graduate student and who has not actively taken courses in a graduate program for more than two regular terms, excluding summer terms, up to the Matriculation Limits, may apply for readmission. The individual will file a Readmission Form with the Graduate School and if applicable, submit official transcripts for any courses taken at a higher education institution during their absence from ETSU. The program coordinator and the Dean of the Graduate School or designee must approve the request.

VII. Application Materials.

All application materials become the property of the university and will not be forwarded or returned.

VIII. Application Fee.

ETSU does not waive the application fee except in these circumstances:

- A. McNair Scholars receive an application fee waiver;
- B. A currently enrolled ETSU graduate student seeking admission to an additional graduate degree or certificate program;
- C. Active duty or honorably discharged members of the US military; and
- D. On occasion, the Graduate School may provide a limited fee waiver as part of a special promotion at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate School.

IX. Accreditation.

Degrees from non-accredited institutions and from foreign institutions will be evaluated on an individual basis at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate School.

X. Accommodations.

To the extent possible and subject to the approval of the Program Coordinator, the Dean of the Graduate School or their designee may grant accommodations and other academic adjustments when necessary.

XI. Discrimination.

In accordance with ETSU's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment, ETSU does not discriminate against applicants for admission on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, age, status as a protected veteran, genetic information, or any other legally protected class.

XII. Appeals.

The appeals process is governed by the Graduate School Admission Appeals Policy. If a prospective student is denied admission to ETSU, the individual may qualify to file an appeal as indicated in the Graduate School Admission Appeals Policy. The written Notification of Decision will detail the process by which the prospective student may appeal the decision, if applicable.

XIII. Residency.

A prospective student's classification as in-state or out-of-state for residency purposes will be determined pursuant to ETSU policies, ETSU regulations, federal, and state law.

Authority: TCA § 49-8-203, et. Seq

Defined Terms

A defined term has a special meaning within the context of this policy

Application Deadline	Unless a graduate program has earlier admission deadlines or admits for a single term as stated in the catalog, admission deadlines are those published on the Graduate School admission website.
International Applicant	Any individual who applies to ETSU who is not a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent resident.
Notice of Decision	A written communication from the Graduate School to a prospective student notifying of admission or denial to ETSU.
Official Transcript	A transcript that is sent directly from the issuing institution to the ETSU Graduate School and is sent either electronically or in a sealed envelope.
Professional Degree Program	Include, but are not limited to JD, MD, DO, MD, MSN, DDS, DVM, MSN
Matriculation Limits	Time limit as defined by the Graduate School Policy on Matriculation Limits.

Policy History

Effective Date

Initial: 03/24/2017

Revision: 06/30/2021

Revision: 02/22/2024

Procedures

All prospective Degree-seeking Graduate Students should review the Graduate School Admissions website before applying to ETSU. The procedures for the application and review process related to this policy are as follows:

- I. Application to Master's Degree Program.

A. Procedure for Applying to ETSU.

The procedure for a prospective student to apply to ETSU under this section is as follows:

1. Submit a completed admission application;
2. Pay the application fee;
3. Submit unofficial transcript(s) for all higher education institutions previously attended; and
4. Submit additional required document as indicated under the policy or as required by the applicable program.

B. Procedure for Review of Application.

If prior to the required Application Deadline, a prospective student has: (1) submitted a completed admission application; (2) paid the application fee (if required); (3) submitted unofficial transcript(s) for all higher education institutions previously attended; and (4) submitted supporting documentation required by this policy or the applicable program, a graduate specialist will review the application and required documentation to determine if the minimum requirements have been met. The graduate specialist will refer all applications that meet the minimum requirements to the program for review. The program will make an admission recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

C. Procedure for Notification of Decision.

The Graduate School sends the Notification of Decision to the prospective student.

II. Application to a Graduate Certificate Program.

A. Procedure for Applying to ETSU.

The procedure for a prospective student to apply to ETSU under this section is as follows:

1. Submit a completed admission application;
2. Pay the application fee;
3. Submit an unofficial transcript(s);
4. Submit additional required document as indicated under the policy or as required by the applicable program.

B. Procedure for Review of Application.

If prior to the required Application Deadline, a prospective student has: (1) submitted a completed admission application; (2) paid the application fee (if required); (3) submitted unofficial transcript(s) for all higher education institutions previously attended; and (4) submitted supporting documentation required by this policy or the applicable program, a graduate specialist will review the application and required documentation to determine if the minimum requirements have been met. The graduate specialist will refer all applications that meet the minimum requirements to the program for review. The program will make an admission recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

C. Procedure for Notification of Decision.

The Graduate School sends the Notification of Decision to the prospective student.

III. Application to an Educational Specialist Degree Program.

A. Procedure for Applying to ETSU.

The procedure for a prospective student to apply to ETSU under this section is as follows:

1. Submit a completed admission application;
2. Pay the application fee;
3. Submit unofficial transcript(s);
4. Submit a photocopy of the teaching certificate;
5. Submit four (4) letters of recommendation; and
6. Submit additional required document as indicated under the policy or as required by the applicable program.

B. Procedure for Review of Application.

If prior to the required Application Deadline, a prospective student has: (1) submitted a completed admission application; (2) paid the application fee (if required); (3) submitted unofficial transcript(s) for all higher education institutions previously attended; (4) submitted a photocopy of the teaching certificate; (5) submitted four (4) letters of recommendation; and (6) submitted supporting documentation required by this policy or the applicable program, a graduate specialist will review the application and required documentation to determine if the minimum requirements have been met. The graduate specialist will refer all applications that meet the minimum requirements to the program for review. The program will make an admission recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

C. Procedure for Notification of Decision.

The Graduate School sends the Notification of Decision to the prospective student.

IV. Application to a Doctoral Program.

A. Procedure for Applying to ETSU.

The procedure for a prospective student to apply to ETSU under this section is as follows:

1. Submit a completed admission application;
2. Pay the application fee;
3. Submit unofficial transcript(s);
4. Submit three letters of recommendation; and
5. Submit additional required document as indicated under the policy or as required by the applicable program.

B. Procedure for Review of Application.

If prior to the required Application Deadline, a prospective student has: (1) submitted a completed admission application; (2) paid the application fee (if required); (3) submitted unofficial transcript(s) for all higher education institutions previously attended; (4) three (3) letters of recommendation; and (5) submitted supporting documentation required by this policy or the applicable program, a graduate specialist will review the application and required documentation to determine if the minimum requirements have been met. The graduate specialist will refer all applications that meet the minimum requirements to the program for review. The program will make an admission recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

C. Procedure for Notification of Decision.

The Graduate School sends the Notification of Decision to the prospective student.

V. Change of Graduate Program.

The procedure for changing a graduate program is as follows:

- A. apply to the new program; and
- B. follow all requirements outlined in the Graduate Admissions Policy.

Procedure History

Effective Date

Initial: 03/24/2017

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Related Form(s)

Scope and Applicability

Primary: Academic

Secondary: Students